

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claims 19 and 38 without prejudice, and amend the claims as follows:

1 to 19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) **A device for sintering of a silicon dioxide soot body, said device comprising:**

**a gas-tight chamber having an inner space therein and a duct communicating therewith and a heating zone in the inner space; and**

**a device for vertical feeding of the mold body into the heating zone, said vertical feeding device having a hoisting apparatus extending into the inner space of the chamber through the duct, said hoisting apparatus being movable by means of a drive arranged outside of the chamber;**

**the hoisting apparatus having a drive shaft extending through the duct into the inner space of the chamber, said drive shaft being connected to the drive; and**

**A device according to Claim 19, wherein the hoisting apparatus adjacent the heating zone has a link chain having individual links.**

21. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the link chain deviates from a direction of vertical traction by contact with a deviation structure.

22. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the links of the link chain are connected to each other so as to prevent relative rotation thereof around a longitudinal axis of the link chain.

23. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 21, wherein the links of the link chain are connected to each other so as to prevent relative rotation thereof around a longitudinal axis of the link chain.

24. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein each link of the link chain includes a fixed link or eyelet, said fixed links or eyelets being movably connected by a pin.

25. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 21, wherein each link of the link chain includes a fixed link or eyelet, said fixed links or eyelets being movably connected by a pin.

26. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 25, wherein the link chain has individual rollers, each roller on deviation being supported on the deviation structure.

27. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 26, wherein the rollers each have a diameter and the fixed links or eyelets have external heights that are smaller than the diameter of the rollers.

28. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 26, wherein the deviation structure has a recess therein which receives therein the fixed links or eyelets spaced from the deviation structure so as not to engage therewith.

29. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 21, wherein the deviation structure comprises a deviation wheel.

30. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 29, wherein the deviation wheel has a chain wheel positively engaging into the link chain.

31. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 30, wherein the deviation wheel is driven by means of the drive shaft.

32. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the link chain is connected through a traction rope to a take-up reel driven by means of the drive shaft.

33. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the links of the links chain are of a tensile and temperature-resistant material.

34. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the links are of a mineral carbon material reinforced by carbon fiber.

35. (currently amended) A device according to Claim 20 ~~19~~, wherein a force-sensing device determines a force acting upon the hoisting apparatus.
36. (currently amended) A device according to Claim 35, wherein the link chain deviates from a direction of vertical traction by contact with a deviation structure, and the force-sensing device has a strain control strip to determine the force acting upon the deviation structure.
37. (currently amended) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the device includes a guiding appliance for the link chain which prevents deviation diagonally to a ~~the~~ traction direction of the link chain.
38. (canceled)
39. (previously presented) A device according to Claim 20, wherein the device includes a catch limiting vertical movement of the link chain.